

Immediate reasons Papagos work--

461 Aside from the necessity for earning enough cash
794 to buy food and clothing, there are other reasons for
796 earning money. During the picking season three im-
portant religious events occur. These are the feast
days of St. Francis of Assisi and St. Francis Xavier,
and All Souls Day of the Roman Catholic ceremonial
calendar. A very high proportion of the tribe goes to
one or another, or all three.

795 Although several denominations have gained a foot-
184 hold among the Desert People, the vast majority are
orthodox or Sonora Catholics. Harvest hands in 1950
were about 95% Catholic. The rest are about evenly
divided between Protestants and individuals conscious-
ly rejecting Christian allegiance to practice native
forms of religion or none at all. The Presbyterian
church has the largest following among Protestant
groups, with six congregations on the reservation.
[797] There are other missions on the reservations. However,
missionary activity does not extend to labor camps.

484 From the great reservoir of Papago Catholics come
788 the pilgrims to Magdalena, San Xavier, Chuwhiy Guwak
782 at fiesta time. These pilgrims make their journeys
755 primarily to keep promises they've made to the Saint,
796 or to ask him to intercede for them. Because they have
very deep faith in the powers of St. Francis to cure
illnesses, the Desert People frequently vow to the
Saint that if the petitioner or one of his loved ones
is cured, he will visit the statue of the Saint in the
Magdalena (or San Xavier or Chuwhiy Guwak) church.
Often the person vows to make four such visits, to
place a number of candles for the Saint, to leave him
an amount of money, perhaps even to walk from the
border to Magdalena or to perform some other penance.

78 Not all those petitioning the Saint seek health.
[796] Some ask aid in business, love or other ventures. The
[798] Desert People bring statues and pictures from their
household shrines and chapels to press against the
statue of the Saint for his blessing. They buy yards
of bright ribbons, sold in shops thrown up about the

¹Based on information from 35 individuals.

²Not 1 of 2 persons questioned had seen a missionary
in 1950. 1 had in a previous year.

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church, to be blessed and taken home to give those who couldn't come. But 9 Papagos out of 10 at one of the pilgrimage towns in October, 1950, came to fulfill a vow.¹

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So important are these pilgrimages to the Desert People that almost three-fifths of the Papagos in the cotton fields in 1950 went to Magdalena, San Xavier or Chuwily Guwak for the October celebration.² In numbers, this apparently meant over 2,500 Papagos traveled from southern Arizona labor camps to one of these three churches.³ Many more Desert People left their homes on the reserves to make their pilgrimages, although the proportion was not as high because of the large number of Protestants among those remaining on the reserves during picking season, and lack of money to finance a pilgrimage. Perhaps another 1,000 individuals made pilgrimages from the reserves. Almost half the tribe went on the 1950 pilgrimage.

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This religious exodus affected virtually every cotton farm where Papagos worked to some extent.⁴ The number of Papago pilgrims at Magdalena in 1950 seemed rather higher than the year before, apparently reflecting greater psychological stress in the tribe, perhaps arising from greater awareness of a critical economic position and unsettled world conditions again threatening young men. A fifth of the 1950 cotton harvesters had made a pilgrimage in some previous year although they didn't in 1950.⁵ indicating the high proportion of pilgrims returning.

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Greatest of the 3 celebrations is that held on the day of St. Francis of Assisi, October 4. Pilgrims travel to all three churches where miraculous curing statues of St. Francis Xavier are located--Magdalena, San Xavier, and Chuwily Guwak.

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The largest celebration leading up to the Oct. 4 rites galvanizes the small Mexican city of Magdalena, an adobe settlement located about 60 miles south of the international boundary in Sonora. Many are the stories of cures by its powerful statue, which is supposed to have come to the spot when burros bearing it northward for a procession of officials refused to proceed.

¹Based on 11 persons giving reasons for their trips.
²23 of 40 individuals giving information made pilgrimages, 57%.

³There were about 1,000 families with 4,500 Papagos in labor camps in Pima and Pinal counties in 1950.

⁴9 of 10 farmers in Pima county and 10 of 10 in Pinal giving information lost some Papago workers.

⁵8 of 40 giving information, 20%.